

Committee on Resources

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Statement by Congressman Ed Case of Hawai'i

on H.R. 546,

the Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park Addition Act of 2003

in the House Resources Subcommittee

on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands

July 22, 2003

Chairman Radanovich, Ranking Member Christensen, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Aloha! Thank you for giving me the opportunity today to testify in support of my bill to authorize expansion of the Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park, located on the Kona Coast of the Island of Hawai'i. This bill is identical to Senator Daniel Akaka's bill S. 254, which passed the Senate on March 4, 2003, and was referred to this subcommittee.

H.R. 546 and S. 254 authorize expansion of the park boundaries to allow the National Park Service to purchase a 2.14-acre parcel with an existing building to serve as a park headquarters. The park has been without a permanent headquarters since its establishment in 1978, and is now renting space some distance from the park.

Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park was created for the national preservation, protection and interpretation of traditional native Hawaiian activities and culture. This 1,160-acre park is remarkable not only for its cultural and historical attributes, but as an incredibly beautiful, unspoiled natural treasure. The park is the site of an ancient Hawaiian settlement, which encompasses portions of four different ahupua'a, or traditional sea-to-mountain land divisions. Its resources include ancient fishponds, kahua (house site platforms), ki'i pohaku (petroglyphs), a holua (stone slide), and heiau (religious sites). The park is of tremendous significance to the people of Hawai'i, and especially to indigenous Native Hawaiians.

The National Park Service is currently renting space for its headquarters at a cost of \$150,000 a year. The current headquarters only has parking for three to four visitors at a time, which is woefully inadequate to accommodate the growing number of visitors to the park. Visitors increased from 54,000 in 2001 to 70,000 in 2002. The proposed acquisition has plenty of parking for visitors and park vehicles. And the existing building has more than adequate space for the park's administrative needs and interpretive mission. The already-developed parcel has the additional benefit of being right next to the park; therefore, the fragile resources within the current park boundaries will not be adversely affected.

I strongly encourage the subcommittee members to come to my birthplace, the Big Island of Hawai'i, to visit this remarkable park, and I thank you for considering this legislation.